CLAIMS

We claim:

1.   A method for generating a profile concerning prescription therapy practices of at least one physician in a therapeutic area of interest, comprising the steps of:

(a)   receiving a plurality of historical de-identified patient prescription records corresponding to prescriptions issued to at least one de-identified patient by at least one physician, each record including de-identified patient identification number, dosage, and prescription product information;

(b)   receiving user-specified information defining a subset of the historical de-identified patient prescription records;

(c)   extracting at least one relevant historical de-identified patient prescription record from the received historical de-identified patient prescription records based on the subset;

(d)   for each de-identified patient, comparing dosage and prescription product information contained in a first extracted historical de-identified patient record with dosage and prescription product information contained in a second extracted historical de-identified patient record; and

(e)   for each comparison made in step (d), categorizing a prescription based on a change in dosage or prescription product.

2.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving user-specified information further comprises receiving information concerning an observation period.

3.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of extracting de-identified patient prescription records further comprises discarding a historical de-identified patient prescription record having an eligibility of shorter duration than the observation period.

4.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of categorizing prescriptions further comprises categorizing a prescription of a product as a new therapy start when a de-identified patient has had no other prescriptions in a therapeutic area to which the product pertains.

5.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of categorizing prescriptions further comprises categorizing a prescription as a therapy switch when a de-identified patient has had no other prescriptions of the product, and when the de-identified patient has had a prescription of a second product within a therapeutic area to which the product pertains that was not prescribed on the same day as the prescription.

6.   The method of claim 1, wherein step of categorizing prescriptions further comprises categorizing a prescription as an add-on therapy when the de-identified patient had no other prescriptions for the product but had a prescription for a second product within the therapeutic area to which the product pertains that was prescribed on the same day.

7.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of categorizing prescriptions further comprises categorizing a prescription as a titration decrease when a de-identified patient has previously had a prescription for the product at a higher dosage.

8.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of categorizing prescriptions further comprises categorizing a prescription as a titration increase when a de-identified patient has previously had a prescription for the product at a lower dosage.

9.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of categorizing prescriptions further comprises categorizing a prescription as continued therapy when a de-identified patient has previously had a prescription for the product at the same dosage.

10.   A method for generating a profile concerning prescription therapy practices of at least one physician in a therapeutic area of interest comprising the steps of:

    (a)   receiving a plurality of historical de-identified patient prescription records corresponding to prescriptions issued to at least one de-identified patient by at least one physician, each record including de-identified patient identification number, prescription product information, date dispensed, dosage, number of days supplied, and refill information;

    (b)   receiving user-specified information defining a subset of the historical de-identified patient prescription records;

(c)   extracting at least one relevant historical de-identified patient prescription record from the received historical de-identified patient prescription records based on the subset;

(d)   for each de-identified patient, comparing dosage and prescription product information contained in a first extracted historical de-identified patient record with dosage and prescription product information contained in a second extracted historical de-identified patient record;

(e)   for each comparison made in step (d), categorizing a prescription based on a change in dosage or prescription product;

(f)   extracting at least one relevant historical de-identified patient prescription record from the prescriptions categorized at step (e) based on the refill information;

(g)   for each de-identified patient, determining a refill due date based on the dosage and the number of days supplied for a first prescription;

(h)   for each de-identified patient, comparing the refill due date of the first prescription with the date dispensed for a second prescription; and

(i)   for each comparison made in step (h), categorizing the de-identified patient based on the duration between the refill due date of the first prescription and the date dispensed for the second prescription.

11.   The method of claim 10, wherein the step of receiving user-specified information further comprises receiving information concerning an observation period.

12.   The method of claim 11, further comprising a step of discarding, after step (e), a historical de-identified patient prescription record for a de-identified patient having more than one physician during the observation period.

13.   The method of claim 11, wherein the step of extracting de-identified patient prescription records based on refill information further comprises discarding a historical de-identified patient prescription record not having a refill due within the observation period.

14.   The method of claim 10, wherein the step of categorizing prescriptions further comprises categorizing a prescription of a product as a new therapy start when a de-identified patient has had no other prescriptions in a therapeutic area to which the product pertains.

15.   The method of claim 10, wherein the step of categorizing prescriptions further comprises categorizing a prescription as a therapy switch when a de-identified patient has had no other prescriptions of the product, and when the de-identified patient has had a prescription of a second product within a therapeutic area to which the product pertains that was not prescribed on the same day as the prescription.

16.   The method of claim 15, further comprising a step of discarding, after step (e), a historical de-identified patient prescription record for a prescription categorized as a therapy switch.

17.   The method of claim 10, wherein the step of categorizing prescriptions further comprises categorizing a prescription as a titration decrease when a de-identified patient has previously had a prescription for the product at a higher dosage.

18.   The method of claim 17, further comprising a step of discarding, after step (e), a historical de-identified patient prescription record for a prescription categorized as a titration decrease.

19.   The method of claim 10, wherein the step of categorizing prescriptions further comprises categorizing a prescription as a titration increase when a de-identified patient has previously had a prescription for the product at a lower dosage.

20.   The method of claim 19, further comprising a step of discarding, after step (e), a historical de-identified patient prescription record for a prescription categorized as a titration increase

21.   The method of claim 10, wherein the step of categorizing the de-identified patient based on the duration between the due date of the first prescription and the fill date of the second prescription further comprises categorizing the de-identified patient as persistent if the duration is shorter than a predetermined number of days.

22.   The method of claim 21, wherein the step of categorizing the de-identified patient based on the duration between the due date of the first prescription and the fill date

of the second prescription further comprises categorizing the de-identified patient as non-persistent if the duration is greater than a predetermined number of days.

23.   The method of claim 22, further comprising a step of determining, after step (i), the total number of persistent de-identified patients and the total number of non-persistent de-identified patients for each physician.

24.   The method of claim 23, further comprising a step of calculating, after the step of determining the total number of persistent de-identified patients and the total number of non-persistent de-identified patients for each physician, persistence of the physician by dividing the total number of persistent de-identified patients by the total number of de-identified patients for each physician.

25.   A system for generating a profile concerning prescription therapy practices of at least one physician in a therapeutic area of interest, comprising:

(a)   a mass storage device for storing a plurality of historical de-identified patient prescription records corresponding to prescriptions issued to at least one de-identified patient by at least one physician, each record including a de-identified patient identification number, dosage, number of days supplied and prescription product information, dosage, fill date, and number of days supplied;

(b)   an input device, coupled to the mass storage device, for receiving user-specified information which defines a subset of the plurality of historical de-identified patient prescription records;

(c)   a prescription categorizer, coupled to the input device, configured to compare the dosage and the prescription product information contained in a first historical de-identified patient prescription record with the dosage and prescription product information contained in a second historical de-identified patient prescription record, and to categorize a prescription based on a change in dosage or prescription product; and

(d)   a persistence calculator, coupled to the prescription categorizer, configured to determine the due date of a first prescription based on the dosage and the number of days supplied, to compare the due date of the first prescription with the fill date of a second prescription, and to categorize the de-identified patient based on the duration between the due date of the first prescription and the fill date of the second prescription.

26.   The system of claim 25, wherein the prescription categorizing is configured to categorize a prescription of a product as a new therapy start when a de-identified patient has had no other prescriptions in a therapeutic area to which the product pertains.

27.   The system of claim 25, wherein the prescription categorizing is configured to categorize a prescription of a product as a therapy switch when a de-identified patient has had no other prescriptions of the product, and when the de-identified patient has had a prescription of a second product within a therapeutic area to which the product pertains that was not prescribed on the same day as the prescription.

28.   The system of claim 25, wherein the prescription categorizing is configured to categorize a prescription of a product as an add-on therapy when the de-identified patient had no other prescriptions for the product but had a prescription for a second product within the therapeutic area to which the product pertains that was prescribed on the same day.

29.   The system of claim 25, wherein the prescription categorizing is configured to categorize a prescription of a product as a titration decrease when a de-identified patient has previously had a prescription for the product at a higher dosage.

30.   The system of claim 25, wherein the prescription categorizing is configured to categorize a prescription of a product as a titration increase when a de-identified patient has previously had a prescription for the product at a lower dosage.

31.   The system of claim 25, wherein the prescription categorizing is configured to categorize a prescription of a product as continued therapy when a de-identified patient has previously had a prescription for the product at the same dosage.

32.   The system of claim 25, wherein the persistence calculator is further configured to categorize the de-identified patient as persistent if the duration between the due date of the first prescription and the fill date of the second prescription is shorter than a predetermined number of days.

33.   The system of claim 25, wherein the persistence calculator is further configured to categorize the de-identified patient as non-persistent if the duration between the due date of the first prescription and the fill date of the second prescription is greater than a predetermined number of days.

34.   The system of claim 25, wherein the persistence calculator is further configured to determine the total number of persistent de-identified patients and the total number of non-persistent de-identified patients for each physician.

35.   The system of claim 34, wherein the persistence calculator is further configured to determine the persistence of the physician by dividing the total number of persistent de-identified patients by the total number of de-identified patients for each physician.